

And 6 at 14M

Harrisonville Cass county Mo
Sept 29th 1853.

Dr. Jory Professor of Botany
Sir.



I take the liberty of writing you concerning a plant I found a few days since

Although I am a total stranger to you - you are well known to me by reputation - knowing your great love of Botany encourages me to write freely to you concerning the plant that interests me so much - had I your works I have no doubt I could satisfy myself without giving you trouble for I can scarcely hope it is a new sp.

As near as I can remember it is Hibiscus - at present I have no works to refer to - about five years ago I lost all my books - they were freighted & insured from New York to Oregon City - I have traced them to San Francisco & no farther - I have no doubt they have been burnt in that place -

As they are insured with the Atlantic Mutual Insurance Co I have no doubt I shall get my money after a time, & then be able to make up my book losses again -

The Hibiscus? I forward you is not a good specimen - It was about the last flower of the season - I was several miles from home cutting horses, when I found it - As I had no proper means of securing it, it is very much damaged - I found it growing in a moist very rich alluvial soil, by the side of a prairie water hole, that is supplied by the rains - It is a perennial sending up many shoots of about 3 feet 6 inches in length - about the Christmas of the year.

— 41 I found a very pretty Hibiscus in the interior of South Africa near the Coshan Mountains which the Dutch immigrants call Macali's berg from a chief named Macali that lives in that region of country — Near the place I found the Hibiscus & amongst the mountains I found many fine plants — The Hibiscus & a few others are figured in Hooker's continuation of Curtis I think in the year — 43 several are figured in Sir W. J. Hooker's Icones plantarum one is a leguminous tree, which Sir W. J. H. has honoured me by calling after my name I have seen none of these figures, as I have scarcely been in England since —

When the gold was first discovered in California, I went there — I spent all the time collecting, that I could not mine — My Herbarium was all lost — I sent a quantity of seeds to Europe according to former promises — I also sent a collection of reptiles & Coleoptera insects to the British Museum — I suppose they were also lost as I have heard nothing of them since — I have sent several collections of Coleoptera to Mr. Mully the great Entomologist of Liverpool — as I have never heard anything of them since — I have great reason to believe they were also lost —

If you have a friend or acquaintance that is interested in Coleoptera I have a small bottle at his service, which I have collected on my own farm, & would feel happy to forward the first opportunity.

I am sir, with much respect, your most obedient
servant
Joseph Burke

